

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 IO-10 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00

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TRSE-00 PM-03 H-02 L-02 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 ACDA-05 /096 W

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P R 121025Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 064

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EAIR, ETRD, PK, IN

SUBJ: GOP VIEWS ON EVE OF INDO/PAK TALKS

REFERENCES: A. ISLAMABAD 11081, 23 NOV 74

B. ISLAMABAD 2361; C. ISLAMABAD 3841

SUMMARY. PAK FOREIGN SECRETARY WILL LEAD GOP DELEGATION TO NEW DELHI FOR NEGOTIATIONS ON CIVIL AVIATION. EMBASSY IS UNABLE TO DETERMINE HOW MUCH FLEXIBILITY THERE IS IN GOP POSITION ON CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECT OF ITS CASE AGAINST INDIA BEFORE ICAO. RESOLUTION OF THIS ISSUE COULD OPEN UP OVERFLIGHTS AND CIVIL AIR LINKS. GOP UNDERSTANDS GOI MAY WANT TO DISCUSS SALAL DAM BUT FEELS THAT THIS MORE PROPERLY SUBJECT FOR TECHNICAL LEVEL TALKS. MFA OFFICIAL TOLD EMBOFFS THAT GOP MOST CONCERNED ABOUT PERSISTENCE OF HOSTILE PROPAGANDA AND GOI QUESTIONING OF PAK COMMITMENT TO PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES. KASHMIR WILL LIKELY BE SUBJECT FOR LOW-LEVEL MUTUAL COMPLAINTS AND GOP DOES NOT

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EXPECT EARLY RESTORATION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. END
SUMMARY.

1. PAK DELEGATION, LED BY FOREIGN SECRETARY AGHA SHAHI, WILL LEAVE EARLY MAY 15 FOR OFT-POSTPONED TALKS IN NEW DELHI ON CIVIL AVIATION AND OTHER MATTERS. SPECIFIC PURPOSE IS TO ATTEMPT TO SETTLE CONTROVERSY ARISING OVER RIVAL CLAIMS FOR DAMAGES RESULTING FROM 1971 HIJACKING OF INDIAN PLANE AND GOI WITHDRAWAL OF OVERFLIGHT RIGHTS TO GOP. STICKING POINT HAS BEEN WHETHER MATTER CAN BE SETTLED OUT OF COURT. GOI HAS IN PAST INSISTED THAT GOP WITHDRAW ITS CASE FROM ICAO- GOP HAS INSISTED ON "PRINCIPLE" OF GOP RIGHT TO TAKE DISPUTES TO INTERNATIONAL BODIES WHEN BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS FAIL. SUCCESS ON THIS SUBJECT COKCD LEAD TO NEGOTIATIONS ON RESUMPTION OF OVERFLIGHTS AND AIR LINKS. MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR SOUTH ASIA, DR. HAYAT MEHDI, TOLD EMBOFFS ON MAY 10 THAT THERE WAS NO "AGENDA" AND THAT FOREIGN SECRETARY PREPARED TO DISCUSS OTHER ISSUES. ALTHOUGH COMPOSITION OF DELEGATION NOT YET SETTLED, EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS OTHERS WILL INCLUDE ADDITIONAL SECRETARY SHAHNAWAZ, MEHDI AND DIRECTOR HILALY FROM MFA; SECRETARY #7. BEG FROM MINISTRY OF FUEL, POWER AND NATURAL RESOURCES; AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM AVIATIMC DIVISION (IN MIN DEFENSE) INCLUDING LEGAL EXPERTS.

2. CIVIL AVIATION: MEHDI SAID HE WAS HOPEFUL THAT AN AIR AGREEMENT COULD BE ACHIEVED AT THE MEETING, ALTHOUGH INTEREST ON REACHING AN AGREEMENT APPEARED GREATER ON THE INDIAN THAN PAK SIDE. THE ABSENCE OF OVERFLIGHT RIGHTS WAS ESTIMATED TO BE COSTING THE INDIANS \$5 MILLION AND THE PAKS 1.5 MILLION PER ANNUM. HE CONFIRMED THAT THE CITIES TO WHICH SERVICE MIGHT BE STARTED WERE KARACHI AND LAHORE IN PAKISTAN AND DELHI AND BOMBAY IN INDIA. HE WAS FUZZY ABOUT THE PAK POSITION ON THE ICAO-LAHORE HIJACKING PROBLEM, SAYING ONLY THAT HE PRESUMED INDIANS WOULD BE MORE FLEXIBLE THAN BEFORE. HE DID NOT SUGGEST, AS ABDUL SATTAR HAD DONE IN MARCH (REF B) THAT THERE WAS ANY CHANGE IN GOP NEGOTIATING POSITION FROM TALKS LAST NOVEMBER (REF A).

3. TRADE ISSUES: ON THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED GOP TRADE MISSION VISIT TO INDIA, MEHDI WAS ABLE TO ADD NOTHING NEW.

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THE PAKS HAD NOT CONTRACTED TO BUY ANY MANUFACTURED ITEMS

BUT WOULD CONSIDER SUCH PURCHASES LATER IN ADDITION TO THE RAW MATERIALS THEY DID PLAN TO IMPORT. WHEN ASKED ABOUT RAIL LINKS BEING DISCUSSED AT THE UPCOMING DELHI MEETING, MEHDI SAID THAT IF THE INDIA RAISED IT, THE

PAKS WERE PREPARED TO CONSIDER RE-ESTABLISHING THESE.

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4. SALAL DAM: ON THIS ISSUE, MEHDI REITERATED THE PREVIOUS GOP CONCERN OVER THE PLANNED INDIAN DESIGN. THE PAKS UNDERSTOOD THAT THE INDIANS WERE PLANNING TO BUILD GATES TO THE DAM WHICH WOULD ENABLE THE INDIANS TO CUT OFF ALL WATER SUPPLIES TO THE CHENAB RIVER FOR 20 DAYS IN THE DRY SEASON AND FIVE IN THE RAINY SEASON. THE PAKS PREFERRED TO HAVE THIS ISSUE DISCUSSED AT THE TECHNICAL LEVEL UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE ALREADY ESTABLISHED INDUS TREATY COMMISSION. GIVEN THE COMPLICATED ENGINEERING ASPECTS, MEHDI DOUBTED THAT EITHER OF THE PRINCIPALS GOING TO THE MAY 15 MEETING WAS QUALIFIED TO DISCUSS IT.

5. HOSTILE PROPAGANDA: SOURCE OF SOME DISCOURAGEMENT TO GOP, SAID MEHDI, WAS CONTINUING STATEMENTS BY INDIAN PRIME MINISTER, FOREIGN AND DEFENSE MINISTERS QUESTIONING PAKISTAN'S PEACEFUL INTENTIONS--ESPECIALLY IN CONTEXT OF CHANGED US ARMS SUPPLY POLICY. INDIAN MEDIA HAS CONTINUED CRITICAL COMMENTS ON WIDE RANGE OF ISSUES-- FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC, INCLUDING PERSONAL COMMENTS ABOUT

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BHUTTO. MEHDI CLAIMED PAK RADIO BROADCASTS HAD REFRAINED FROM PERSONAL COMMENTS ALTHOUGH THEY CONTINUED TO DISCUSS POLICY DIFFERENCES. HE INTENDED, HE SAID, TO TAKE HIS REPORTS OF MONITORED RADIO BROADCASTS WITH HIM TO NEW DELHI THAT HE AND ASHOK CHIB COULD MAKE A COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT.

6. KASHMIR: MEHDI AGREED THAT KASHMIR MIGHT COME UP IN NEW DELHI TALKS IN TERMS OF INDIRA/ABDULLAH AGREEMENT. WHILE MEHDI AGREED THAT THIS ACCORD HAD NOT CHANGED THE STATUS OF KASHMIR WITHIN INDIA, GOP WAS PERPLEXED BY GOI RATIONALE THAT THE AGREEMENT WOULD "HELP" THE NORMALIZATION PROCESS UNDER THE SIMLA ACCORD. GOP WAS INTERESTED IN HOW SUCH A CONCLUSION COULD BE REACHED: SIMLA PROVIDES FOR DISCUSSION OF THE DISPUTE AND "SETTLEMENT". IN ACTUAL FACT, MEHDI SAID, GOP HAS NO EXPECTATION THAT GOI HAS ANY INTENTION OF BEING "FLEXIBLE" ON TERRITORIAL DISPUTE AND SO DEADLOCK CONTINUES. ECON COUNSELOR ASKED IF GOI MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN "SOFT" KASHMIR BORDER PERMITTING TRADE AND TRAVEL. MEHDI THOUGHT NOT AS GOI WOULD FEAR MUSLIMS ON THEIR SIDE WOULD SEEK TO REJOIN THEIR FAMILIES ON THIS. HE INDICATE THAT THERE WAS PRESSURE HERE AGAINST A "SAFE" BORDER POLICY BECAUSE IT WAS INTERPRETED AS ACCEPTANCE OF THE CURRENT LINE OF CONTROL AS PERMANENT BORDER. WHEN ASKED TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN LINE "OF CONTROL AND "LINE OF PEACE" REFERRED TO BY BHUTTO IN HIS CORRESPONDENCE, MEHDI SMILED AND SAID LATTER WAS LINE "MUTUALLY AGREEABLE" TO BE DECIDED "SOME TIME IN THE FUTURE."

7. DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS: DIRECTOR GENERAL SAID GOP WOULD NOT BRING UP SUBJECT OF RESTORATION OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS: " THE BALL IS IN THEIR COURT." IT WAS HIS IMPRESSION, HOWEVER, THAT GOI WAS GOING TO HOLD OUT UNTIL QUESTION OF

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3BWBKVRPZASZIREKTSQ XBTO#UNSC SEAT: EMBOFF ASKED WHETHER GOP HAD RECEIVED ANY REACTION TO ITS PRESENTATION IN SUPPORT OF PAKISTAN'S CANDIDACY TO UNSC SEAT? (REF C CONTAINS ARGUMENTS WHY INDIA SHOULD NOT BE CHOSEN.) MEHDI SQUIRMED AND SAID AIDE MEMOIRE HAD CONCENTRATED

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ON WEAKNESS OF INDIAN CASE FOR THE SEAT BECAUSE AT THAT TIME GOI WAS PAKISTAN'S ONLY RIVAL. SUBSEQUENTLY, INDONESIA

HAS INDICATED ITS CANDIDATURE. NEVERTHELESS, GOP WANTS THE
SEAT AND HAS FOR SEVERAL YEARS, HE CLAIMED.
BYROADE

NOTE BY OC/T: ISLAMABAD 4257 SEC 2 OF 2 PARA 7 (##)
AS RECEIVED. CORRECTION TO FOLLOW.

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